

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-10

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DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

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INFO USDEL JEC PARIS

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

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TAGS: PINT, VS

SUBJECT: VN PRESS VOICES CRITICISM OF US ATTITUDE AND ROLE
DURING CURRENT NORTH VIETNAMESE OFFENSIVE

DEPT PAS TO IBS/NCA

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. INCREASING NUMBER NEWS REPORTS AND EDITORIALS IN BOTH PRO-GVN AND OPPOSITION PRESS CONTAIN INFORMATION CRITICAL OF U.S. CRITICISM MAY BE OPEN AND BITTER AS IN TRANG DEN'S (INDEPENDENT/OPPOSITION) RHETORICAL QUESTION OF MARCH 15 WHICH ASKED "WHY DOESN'T KISSINGER RESIGN AS HIS FOREIGN POLICY IS PARALYZED BY CONGRESS' STRINGS" OR MORE MATTER-OF-FACT AS IN DOC LAP'S (INDEPENDENT) EDITORIAL OF MARCH 21 WHICH PROCLAIMED THAT: "U.S. SENATE YESTERDAY REJECTED ANY ADDITIONAL AID TO SVN AND CAMBODIA. OF COURSE, THERE IS STILL THE U.S. HOUSE. BUT PRESENT SITUATION LEADS TO CONCLUSION THAT CAMBODIA AND SVN CAN HARDLY EXPECT ANYTHING MORE FROM THE AMERICANS."

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2. ON MARCH 18, DAI DAN TOC (STRONG OPPOSITION) RAN AN EDITITLED, "KISSINGER IS FLEEING FROM INDOCHINA PROBLEM." DIRECTED AT QUESTION OF US AID FOR CAMBODIA, EDITORIAL CLAIMED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER WENT TO THE MIDDLE EAST TO "FLEE AND DODGE HIS DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY IN THE INDOCHINA PROBLEM." ARGUING THAT "THE US STATE DEPARTMENT'S EXPLANATIONS HAVE NOT SUCCEEDED IN MOVING THE US CONGRESS" THE ARTICLE WENT ON TO SAY THAT "THE PROBLEM OF ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR CAMBODIA HAS BECOME A DEAD ISSUE." PRO-GVN DAN CHU RAN EDITORIAL ON MARCH 21 STATING: "IF US GOVERNMENT, PEOPLE AND CONGRESS STAND IDLY BY AND RETURN TO FORMER STATE OF ISOLATION FROM OUTSIDE WORLD, INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISTS WILL NO LONGER MAINTAIN THEIR RESERVED ATTITUDE AND WILL WIDEN THEIR EXPANSION TO OTHER NATIONS BESIDES INDOCHINA." ON MARCH 23, PRO-GVN QUAT CUONG EDITORIALIZED THAT: "MANY STRATEGISTS BELIEVE THAT PRESENT US FOREIGN POLICY WILL EVENTUALLY FORCE US, IN NEAR FUTURE, TO FIGHT COMMUNISM ON THE OTHER EDGE OF THE PACIFIC, ON ITS OWN LAND, INSTEAD OF ACTIVELY HELPING NATIONS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA NOW TO OPPOSE COMMUNIST EXPANSION ON THIS SIDE OF THE OCEAN."

3. SEVERAL NEWS REPORTS, INCLUDING TRANSLATIONS OF AP STORIES, COMMENTED ON FEELINGS OF RESENTMENT TOWARDS AMERICANS ON PART OF REFUGEES. TYPICAL OF THESE WAS AP TRANSLATION WHICH APPEARED IN CHINH LUAN (CONSTRUCTIVE OPPOSITION) ON MARCH 21. THE ARTICLE STATED THAT "THE WAR REFUGEES AND ARVN TROOPS WHO WERE EVACUATED TO THE COASTAL ZONES GAVE THE PERSPECTIVE OF A SITUATION CHARACTERIZED BY DISORDER AND RESENTMENT TOWARDS THE AMERICANS." SAME ACCOUNT CLAIMED THAT "ARVN TROOPS STARED WITH FIERCE LOOKS AT THE CAMERAMEN (PRESUMABLY AMERICAN) WHO TOOK PICTURES OF THEM" AND THE "US CONSULATE GENERAL RECOMMENDED THAT THE AMERICANS USE VEHICLES WHEN TRAVELING ON MAIN STREETS AND IN DAYTIME ONLY."

4. SIR ROBERT THOMPSON'S STATEMENT ON VIETNAM PROVIDED MUCH GRIST FOR EDITORIAL COMMENT AND MANY SAIGON DAILIES EITHER CARRIED HIS REMARKS VERBATIM WITHOUT COMMENT OR BUILT EDITORIALS AROUND THEM. DOC LAP OF MARCH 22 CHOSE THE LATTER AND OPENED ITS FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL BY REPORTING THAT "SIR ROBERT THOMPSON, ENGLISH GUERRILLA EXPERT, MADE A RATHER PESSIMISTIC STATEMENT CONCERNING THE UNITED STATES. HE SAID UNCLASSIFIED

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THE WORLD IS GOING TO WITNESS A "GLOBAL RETREAT" OF THE AMERICANS -- THAT WILL BE THE "GREATEST" WITHDRAWAL SINCE NAPOLEON'S RETREAT FROM MOSCOW. ANSWERING ITS OWN QUESTION AS TO WHETHER SIR ROBERT'S STATEMENT WAS OVERLY-PESSIMISTIC, DOC LAP ARGUED THAT: "IT MUST BE ADMITTED THAT, JUDGING FROM THE MILITARY, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE US, THE ABOVE REMARK IS NOT EXAGGERATED. IT IS MERELY THE TRUTH -- AND IT MAY BE AN INEVITABLE ONE."

CONTENDING THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS ON ITS WAY TOWARD "THE
ULTIMATE GOAL OF COMPLETELY BURYING CAPITALISM," DOC LAP
PROCLAIMED THAT: "IN THE POLITICAL FIELD, US PUBLIC OPINION
IS NOW IN 'CONVALESCENCE' -- RECOVERING FROM THE TWO GREAT
SHOCKS OF ITS DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN THE VIETNAM WAR AND THE
WATERGATE AFFAIR. CHARACTERIZING AMERICAN PEOPLE AS "A WOUNDED
BIRD AFRAID OF A CURVED BRANCH," THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES THAT:
"THE EVENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM AT THE PRESENT TIME MAY BE ONLY THE
FIRST STEP IN THE PROCESS OF BRINGING THE US DOWN TO THE STATUS
OF A SECOND-RANKING POWER."
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